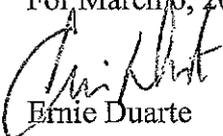




MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 19, 2014
For March 6, 2014 Hearing

TO: Linus Kafka
Zoning Examiner

FROM: 
Ernie Duarte
Planning & Development Services
Director

SUBJECT: REZONING PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES REPORT
C9-13-16 Friends of the Library – Bray Road, R-2 to C-1 (Ward 6)

Issue – This is a request by Robert Longaker of the WLB Group, on behalf of the property owner, Friends of the Library, to rezone approximately 1.06 acres from R-2 to C-1 zoning. The rezoning site is located southeast of the intersection of Grant Road and Country Club Road, approximately 147 feet east of Country Club and Bray Road (see Case Location map). The preliminary development plan proposes two 2,500 square-foot, single-story buildings, landscape and buffer areas, and vehicle parking.

Planning & Development Services Recommendation – The Planning & Development Services Department recommends approval of C-1 zoning, subject to the attached preliminary conditions.

Background Information

Existing Land Use: Commercial buildings, two residential units, and parking areas.

Surrounding Zones and Land Uses:

North: Zoned Commercial Zone (C-1); retail, office, and small business

South: Zoned Commercial Zone (C-1) and Residence Zone (R-2); apartments and small business

East: Zoned Residence Zone (R-2); radio tower facility

West: Zoned Commercial Zone (C-1); retail, commercial, and small business

Previous Cases on the Property:

Zoning Violation Case No. T13DV02322: Vacant residential lots being used as a parking lot. The subject rezoning has been submitted to abate the zoning violation.

Temporary Use Permit No. T13TUP0011. Friends of the Library, 3125 and 3127 E. Edison, Zoned R-2. On August 5, 2013 a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) was granted with conditions, to allow for continued use of the R-2 parcels for book sales parking until the rezoning request was completed. The TUP will expire on August 5, 2014.

Related Cases:

C9-13-09 Girl Scouts – Broadway Boulevard R-1 and P to C-1 (Ward 6) This was a rezoning request for 0.8 of an acre located at the southeast corner of Broadway and Columbus Boulevard to create a consistent zoning pattern to facilitate redevelopment and expansion of the site. On November 6, 2013, Mayor and Council authorized the case.

Applicant’s Request – A zone change for an approximately 1.06 acres portion of the property from R-2 (Residential Zone) to C-1 (Commercial Zone) to allow for the business operations to expand to the east and southeast. The development plan also designates a parking area and the location of two new 2,500 square foot commercial building.

Planning Considerations

Land use policy direction for this area is provided by the *Grant-Alvernon Area Plan* and *Plan Tucson*.

Grant-Alvernon Area Plan policy goals and guidelines are to preserve, protect and enhance the integrity of established neighborhoods; identify appropriate locations for residential, commercial and industrial development; and encourage provision of safe and efficient circulation systems for all modes of transportation. The conceptual land use map supports residentially-scaled office and residentially-scaled neighborhood commercial and high-density residential uses on the site.

General Land Use policies encourage the development of child-friendly uses to complement the scale, character and identity of the surrounding area. Policy supports non-residential development on the perimeter of residential areas to protect and enhance the quality of life for neighborhood residents. Such development should demonstrate sensitivity to surrounding uses through the use of design, location, orientation, landscaping and screening, and by restricting primary access for nonresidential uses to arterial streets or to collector streets.

Commercial development can be supported when primary access is provided to an arterial street. Consolidation of abutting residential parcels with nonresidential uses can be considered when the residential parcel to be consolidated is bound on at least two sides by nonresidential zoning and at least 50% of the residential parcel will be used for parking, maneuvering and landscaping to include a minimum 10-foot wide buffer with a 6-foot high masonry wall and a mix of canopy trees. The Plan’s General Design Guidelines are intended to ensure that development is designed in a manner that enhances the visual appearance of the neighborhood, and that such development is compatible with existing land uses.

Plan Tucson guidelines encourage proposed commercial expansion and the consolidation of parcels for office and commercial use, subject to sensitivity and compatibility with surrounding land uses.

The subject parcels are zoned R-2 residential and located east of the Friends of the Pima County Library main building, which fronts onto Country Club Road. To the east of the rezoning site is an existing residential neighborhood zoned R-2 and R-3, generally single story homes and a two story multi-family complex, including a parcel that contains a communication tower. To the south is R-2 a residential zone with a single story multi-family complex. To the west are parcels zoned C-1 commercial uses fronting Country Club Road. To the north across Bray Road are C-1 zoned commercial uses that front Grant Road and Bray Road.

The Pima Association of Governments - Transportation Planning Division (PAG-TPD) estimates that the proposed development will generate 60 vehicle trips per day. Field inspection by staff indicates there are currently no billboards on the rezoning site.

Design Considerations

Land Use Compatibility – As the site is generally developed, the applicant’s main proposal is to bring the site into compliance with the Unified Development Code (UDC). The R-2 parking area was developed to its current condition to meet the requirements of the TUP. If rezoned, further improvements will be required to UDC standards. A residence is located immediately adjacent to the driveway access to Bray Road. Staff recommends additional buffer yard setbacks and shrubbery along the east and northern parking area to mitigate for light and noise intrusion in this area.

Drainage/Grading/Vegetation – The Design Compatibility Report (DCR) proposes ten foot wide landscape borders, and native trees to meet UDC standards. The applicant is proposing to use an administrative process to seek relief from landscape border requirements. However, it should be noted that complete deletion of required landscaping requires a public hearing before the Board of Adjustment. Plan policy calls for a minimum ten foot wide landscape border with a variety of trees and shrubs and a five foot high masonry screen wall along the residential boundaries to provide privacy and mitigate noise impacts from commercial activities. All vegetation shall be low maintenance and drought-tolerant and/or of similar form and scale to the types existing in the area. Plan policy encourages the use of walls to complement existing developments. To promote visual interest, staff recommends that all screen walls have a decorative design; that the surface texture and colors complement the buildings; and that they be constructed of or painted with graffiti-resistant materials. In addition to enhancing the visual quality of the project, enhanced landscaping will help mitigate the urban heat island effect. Landscape area should be maintained weed free, including eradication of buffelgrass, and retention basins should be sprayed for insect and larva growth during the appropriate seasons as part of the routine landscape maintenance.

Road Improvements/Vehicular Access/Circulation – Plan policy calls for all parking, loading and maneuvering to be provided onsite. The PDP shows one development with integrated vehicular access and circulation. Primary access is from Country Club Road with a secondary access from Bray Road. Staff recommends signage near the northwest corner of the overall site to indicate Bray Road is “NOT A THROUGH STREET” as approved by TDOT. The site plan submitted in support of the rezoning request shows an existing striped 65 space parking area and no sidewalks along

Country Club Road. During the development review process these areas will be required to comply with the UDC. Parking areas should be landscaped with a mix of canopy trees and understory shrubs and ground cover to assist in the urban heat island effect. All ADA parking spaces should be located along the northern edge of the rezoning area and a pedestrian circulation plan be integrated into the PDP, including sidewalks, pavement stripping, and signage. Short and long term bicycle parking should also be located in this general vicinity. For pedestrians and users safety, security lighting should be provided in the parking areas. Plan policy supports minimizing the number of vehicular access points.

Conclusion – The Grant-Alvernon *Area Plan* and the *Plan Tucson* supports the proposed land use change, subject to compliance with the attached preliminary conditions, approval of the requested C-1 zoning is appropriate.